

State Child Death Review Board

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2004 ANNUAL REPORT ON CHILD DEATHS RELEASED

The State Child Death Review Board is pleased to announce, in accordance with state statute, the publishing of the 2004 Annual Report, now available on the Board's website at:
<http://www.ksag.org/Divisions/SCDRB/cdrb.htm>.

"The State Child Death Review Board continuously strives to provide clear, accurate and comprehensive data to Kansas lawmakers and citizens regarding the factors surrounding the deaths of children in our State. The State Child Death Review Board's goal is to provide data that can be utilized to preserve, protect and enhance the lives of present and future generations of Kansas children." –Assistant Attorney General Kevin Graham, Child Death Review Board Chair.

The 2004 Annual report contains data from the Board's evaluation of all deaths in the 2002 calendar year and comparisons with previous years. This is the 9th Annual Report produced since the Board's inception in 1994.

The SCDRB reviewed 498 deaths for calendar year 2002. 2002 matches previous years and the comprehensive numbers (1994 to 2002) very closely. While the total number of deaths was slightly down from previous years, 2002 was consistent with trends noted since the SCDRB began reviewing deaths in 1994.

The Board categorizes deaths as: Natural-Except Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), Unintentional Injuries, Natural-SIDS, Homicides, Suicides and Undetermined deaths. As in the past, Natural death is the largest category (60%), with children under one year making up the majority (76%) of those deaths.

The next largest category is Unintentional Injury (23% of deaths), of which most (69%) were Vehicular. The most represented age group in motor vehicle deaths was 15-17 year-olds (52%). And, as in every year past, the majority (61%) of children dying in motor vehicle accidents were not wearing their seatbelts.

Both Homicides and Suicides were slightly down from 2001. Suicides went from 17 in 2001 to 12 in 2002. This equals the lowest level of suicides in nine years. Homicides dropped from 23 to 15. However, Homicides classified as Child Abuse rose from five to seven.

This year, the Board has once again chosen to highlight the need for more comprehensive child safety legislation. The recommendations of the Board are presented in detail in the Annual Report.

The SCDRB is a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency board that examines the circumstances surrounding the deaths of all Kansas children (birth through 17 years of age) and children who are not Kansas residents, but who die in the state. The goals of the SCDRB are to describe the trends and patterns of child deaths in Kansas, to develop prevention strategies, and to improve sources of data and communication among agencies so that recommendations can be made. Additional information on the SCDRB can be found on the Internet at <http://www.ksag.org/Divisions/SCDRB/cdrb.htm>. The SCDRB program can be contacted by calling 785-296-2215.

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